



Title: Strengthening Retention and Graduation Rates of Disadvantaged Students in a Nutrition/Dietetics Program at Universidad del Turabo

**Award #2007-02397
Amount: \$230,000**

**Project Director
María E. Rosa, DrPH, PhD**



P.O. Box 3030
Gurabo, P.R. 00778-3030

Institutions and Agencies/Organizations Involved

- **School of Health Sciences, Coordinated Program in Nutrition and Dietetics, Universidad del Turabo (UT).**
- **Students Development and Retention Services UT.**
- **Quality of Life and Students Wellbeing Services UT.**
- **School of Sciences & Technology UT.**
- **School of Human and Social Sciences UT.**
- **National Center for Cultural Competence.**



CSREES/USDA Relevant Priority or Mission Area

- The goals of the proposed activities are consistent with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Strategic Goal #5 and Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) Strategic Objectives 5.2 and 5.3. A comprehensive retention and graduation program will expose Hispanic individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to the reality of the Nutrition and Dietetics profession and will provide them with the skills to overcome obstacles for obtaining a college education. UT believes that Hispanic individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds will be able to return to their communities to reduce the present nutrition and dietetics shortage and to positively impact the health of underserved communities in Puerto Rico, or other Hispanic communities elsewhere, considering that there is an increase in the demand for Dietitians/Nutritionists in Puerto Rico.**

Objectives

- (1) By July 2009, maintain a retention rate of minority/disadvantaged UT nutrition/dietetics freshmen students over 90% through the implementation of an individualized nutrition/dietetics retention program.**
- (2) By December 2009, obtain a graduation rate of at least 90% through the implementation of culturally relevant and competent educational activities integrated into the supervised practice component.**



Activities

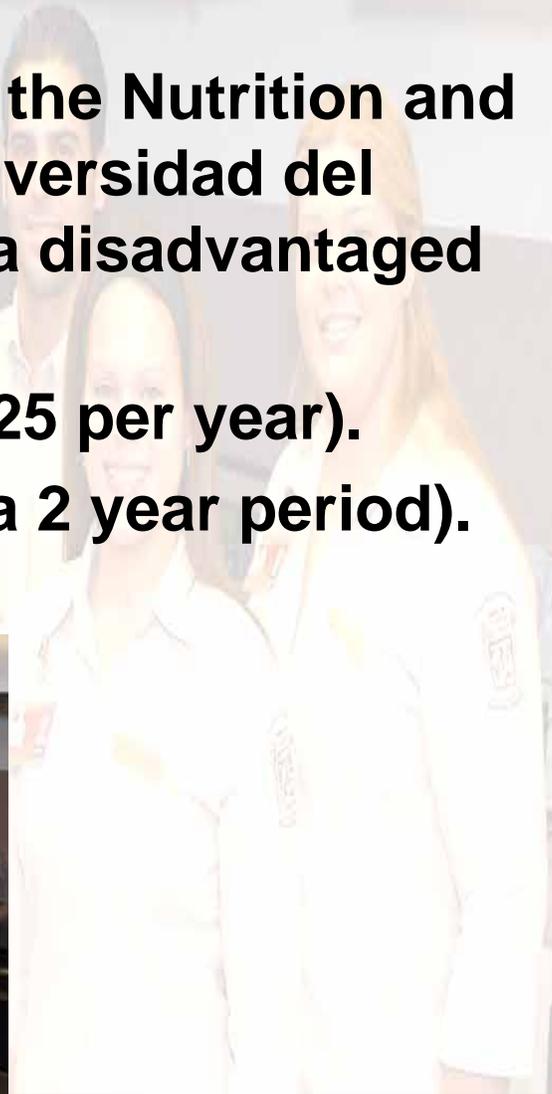
- 1. Establish a mentoring program for freshmen and senior students of the Nutrition and Dietetics Program.**
- 2. Develop a stipend program to support freshmen and senior students.**
- 3. Recruit, admit, and enroll 25 freshmen students per year into the Retention Component.**
- 4. Implement a Workshop Series program prior to Summer Institute among 25 freshmen students.**
- 5. Implement an Educational Support Program which includes a Workshop Series among senior students.**
- 6. Implement a tutoring program to promote retention.**
- 7. Develop and Implement an Academic Program for the Summer Institute.**
- 8. Develop a cultural competent educational program to support senior BSND students who enter the Supervised Practice.**
- 9. Assess, evaluate and refine all activities.**

Beneficiaries and quantify the beneficiaries (if possible)

A total of 42 students from the Nutrition and Dietetics Program at Universidad del Turabo who come from a disadvantaged background

50 freshmen students (25 per year).

17 senior students (in a 2 year period).



Evaluation

Daniel Stufflebeam Model

Area	Type of Evaluation	Expected Outcomes
Context	Summative	(1) Project goals and objectives to be in accordance with UT, School of Health Sciences, Nutrition/Dietetic Program mission.
Input	Summative and Formative	(1) 90% Student retention rate.(2) Program budget allocation. (3)Necessary materials & equipment available.
Process	Summative and Formative	(1)Updated curricular content. (2) SI Manual revised and updated (3) Faculty satisfaction completing evaluation processes. (4) Age appropriateness of the program. (5) Cultural competence of the program.
Product	Summative	(1) Freshmen students completing SI activities 90%. (2) 90% Students completing Nutrition/Dietetic graduation activities by end of project. (3) Mentors satisfaction with program. (4) Students satisfaction with program. (5) Program participants skills improved for a minimum. (6) Liaisons satisfaction with the program. (7) Retention rate over 90% year 1 and 2.

Expected Impact

The purpose of this project is to strengthen the student retention and graduation rates in the only Coordinated BSND Program in Puerto Rico accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE). The UT BSND Program includes over 1200 hours of practicum, including clinical practicum. The SHS received a previous grant from the USDA HSI Education Grants Program in 2004 directed to implement a project for the “Recruitment and Retention of Disadvantaged Students in a Nutrition/Dietetics Program”. The proposed project herein will further strengthen the retention activities initiated by the previous project, but will also add a component to strengthen the graduation rate of the Coordinated BSND Program. Therefore, the project will address the Student Recruitment and Retention Educational Need, within the Human Nutrition discipline.